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Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps, Program Director  
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee

Thursday February 28, 2008

Supporting Senate Bill 367, An Act Concerning A Study Of Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Fontana, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony supporting SB 367. This legislation compliments existing policies, including Connecticut's Clean Car tailpipe emissions standards as well as tax exemptions for purchase of high-efficiency, clean vehicles.

Numerous automotive manufacturers are preparing plug-in hybrid electric vehicles for introduction to the marketplace over the course of the next few years. Such technology, combining conventional hybrid-electric gas motors with the ability to drive extended distances on battery power alone, has the potential to increase the effective fuel economy of cars and trucks to as much as 100MPG.

However, to achieve this fuel-economy performance, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles owners would need access to facilities for charging their vehicle's batteries in between driving trips. For plug-in hybrid vehicles, this can be as simple as ensuring that homeowners have access to appropriate electrical outlets in residential garages. (Allowing them to recharge their vehicle's batteries overnight.)

These issues are addressed in a 2003 report I co-authored titled "*Ready to Roll: The Benefits of Today's Advanced-Technology Vehicles for Connecticut.*" In that report's policy recommendations, we said,

*"several current and next-generation clean car technologies – such as natural gas, battery-electric, and hydrogen-fuel cell vehicles – do require investments in refueling facilities and other forms of infrastructure... State officials should provide leadership by working with multiple stakeholders to devise an alternative-fuel infrastructure plan for the state. Commitments of resources should be directed to areas of strategic importance – such as the state's interstate highway corridors – and should be used to leverage private investment in alternative fuel infrastructure."*

The full report is available online at <http://www.connpirg.org/reports/ReadyToRoll.pdf>.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation. Environment Connecticut urges passage of this legislation and looks forward to working with the committee and other stakeholders to develop workable strategies for creating the necessary infrastructure in Connecticut to support alternative fuel vehicles, including plug-in hybrid and battery electric vehicles.

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps  
Environment Connecticut